

Where has all the meter gone?
Comparing Cicero's *Tusculan Disputations* and Augustine's *Soliloquia*

Augustine of Hippo famously writes against the Roman *spectacula* in several of his works, and his relationship with Latin poetry was famously complicated (Lim 2012, Shanzer 2012). His hesitancy, and sometimes rejection, of the Latin poetic literary tradition is often traced to the ethics of his Christian beliefs. Nonetheless, this poetic reservations might be surprising to readers familiar with Augustine's Ciceronian education (Bouton-Touboulic 2021). The Ciceronian corpus is infused with poetic references which bear interpretive significance for both the poetry and Cicero's own work. One such work is Cicero's *Tusculan Disputations (TD)*, which is littered with poetic quotations from beginning to end. Shortly after Augustine's conversion, he wrote dialogue comparable in style to *TD* called the *Soliloquia*. Both works use initials rather than full names to indicate interlocutors. Although the *Soliloquia* is incomplete, both dialogues concern matters of the soul and the good life. One of the most striking difference between the two works is that, while the *TD* has multiple direct references to poetic sources, in the *Soliloquia*, such references are almost completely absent. In this paper, I argue that Augustine's lack of poetic references so soon after his conversion reveals that he has already adapted Cicero's approach to poetry reference in his philosophical dialogue in important ways. In this way, building on the Ciceronian model, Augustine begin to imagine a new theater of the mind. Scholars have long noticed Augustine's struggles with poetry and his debt to Cicero. This paper considers the distinctive ways in which Augustine's *Soliloquia* brings these issues together.

Works Cited

- Bouton-Touboulic, Anne-Isabelle, and Lucy Sheaf. 2021. "Cicero and Augustine." In *The Cambridge Companion to Cicero's Philosophy*. Edited by Jed W. Atkins and Thomas Bénatouïl. 252–67. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Lim, Richard. 2012. "Augustine and Roman Public Spectacles." In *A Companion to Augustine*. Edited by Mark Vessey. 138-150. Blackwell: Oxford.
- Shanzer, Danuta. 2012. "Augustine and the Latin Classics." In *A Companion to Augustine*. Edited by Mark Vessey. 161-174. Blackwell: Oxford.